

Electroencephalogram (EEG)

What is an EEG?

It is a recording of the electrical activity of the brain. It is done to find unusual electrical discharges.

How do I get ready for an EEG?

Just shampoo your hair the night before the test.

How is an EEG done?

You will be tested in a quiet room. You will either sit in a chair or lie on a couch. Twenty two electrodes, like those attached to your chest for an electrocardiogram (ECG), are attached to your scalp with a cap. The electrodes are connected to a machine. There is no danger of shock. The whole test takes about 1 ½ hours.

What should I do after the test?

You may return to your normal activities. The salt solutions used under the electrodes can be removed by washing your hair.

More information

For more information, you may want to read this article, available in the Patient Education Center, on the first floor:

The Johns Hopkins Consumer Guide to Medical Tests, 2001
Electroencephalography, pages 175-176
(Desk)

Content approval: Neurology Service

May 1985

Reviewed July 1989

Revised August 1991, September 1993

Reviewed October 1995, June 1997

Revised August 1999

Reviewed August 2003, March 2005

VA Medical Center – Minneapolis, Minnesota